U.S. Department of Education
2012 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School - 12TX1

School Type (Public Schools): (Check all that apply, if any) ☐ Charter ☑ Title 1 ☑ Magnet ☑ Choice

Name of Principal: Ms. Leticia Guerra

Official School Name: Mission Early College High School

School Mailing Address: P O Box 292800
El Paso, TX 79929-2800

County: El Paso County State School Code Number*: 071909007

Telephone: (915) 937-1205 E-mail: lguerr02@sisd.net

Fax: (915) 860-2935 Web site/URL: http://www.sisd.net/

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Xavier De La Torre Ed.D. Superintendent e-mail: xtorre@sisd.net

District Name: Socorro ISD District Phone: (915) 937-0000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Michael Najera

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-Public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*
The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

12TX1

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2011-2012 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take foreign language courses.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2006.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 or 2011.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

12TX1

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
   - 27 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   - 8 Middle/Junior high schools
   - 8 High schools
   - 0 K-12 schools
   - 43 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 7276

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Urban or large central city

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2011 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0		6	0	0	0
K	0	0	0		7	0	0	0
1	0	0	0		8	0	0	0
2	0	0	0		9	45	93	138
3	0	0	0		10	42	77	119
4	0	0	0		11	32	88	120
5	0	0	0		12	46	69	115
							Total in Applying School:	492

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
3 %	Asian
1 %	Black or African American
92 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
4 %	White
0 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2010-2011 school year: 2%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	1
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1, 2010 until the end of the school year.	11
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	12
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2010	492
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.02
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	2

8. Percent of English Language Learners in the school: 0%

Total number of ELL students in the school: 0

Number of non-English languages represented: 0

Specify non-English languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 63%

Total number of students who qualify: 309

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 0%

Total number of students served: 0

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

0	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	0	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	0	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	0	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	0	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	3	0
Classroom teachers	27	0
Resource teachers/specialists (e.g., reading specialist, media specialist, art/music, PE teachers, etc.)	0	0
Paraprofessionals	0	0
Support staff (e.g., school secretaries, custodians, cafeteria aides, etc.)	10	0
Total number	40	0

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 21:1

13. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Daily student attendance	97%	98%	98%	98%	98%
High school graduation rate	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%

14. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools):**
Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2011 are doing as of Fall 2011.

Graduating class size:	114
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	91%
Enrolled in a community college	5%
Enrolled in vocational training	0%
Found employment	%
Military service	1%
Other	3%
Total	**100**%

15. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award:

◉ No

○ Yes

If yes, what was the year of the award?

PART III - SUMMARY

12TX1

Mission Early College High School embodies its mission to promote a highly rigorous environment to ensure that students earn a high school diploma as well as an Associate of Arts degree (AA). MECHS is founded on the conviction that high school students are ready and eager to do serious college work. Through a partnership with the El Paso Community College (EPCC), the school's unique vision enables highly motivated students to move in four years from the ninth grade through the first two years of college.

There are several traditions established at MECHS. One of our longest-running traditions is our BPA campfire which invites the community to share our campus experience. We offer intramurals at lunch with a culminating activity ending with our faculty/student face-off. The school's annual talent show is in its sixth year and allows students to showcase their talents for their peers and the community. The MECHS faculty assists in all aspects of the school culture from academics to fundraising. McTeacher Night is an example of the faculty volunteering time to help the school raise funds. It allows students and faculty to work together towards the same goal. Prom, homecoming, and movie nights are traditions well-rooted in the school culture to foster the bonds of unity for MECHS and the community.

There are many strengths embedded that have contributed to the overall success of our campus model. We provide rigor, depth of knowledge, and intense college level work in high school. We focus on smaller classes, a comprehensive fine arts program, and student clubs and organizations. Furthermore, students pursue advanced academic areas of study offered by EPCC. Our program maximizes the instructional quality of the high school years and facilitates the transition of motivated students to higher education. For six years now, the model continues to bring our campus and students success. We continue to serves as a model for other early college high schools and traditional high schools as evidenced by their visits and replication of our model at other sites. Our hope is that we will continue to see this educational opportunity offered to as many young inspiring students as possible.

Our vision from its inception embraced a college-first philosophy. Our goal is to ensure success for a population of low-economic, first generation college-bound students with an accelerated curriculum. MECHS was the first of its kind in El Paso and as a result paved the way for four other early colleges in the city. In May 2010, MECHS was honored with the Student Information System Diamond Award for our commitment to quality data collection and use. Moreover, MECHS continues to be recognized as an exemplary campus by the Texas Education Agency. Our students have overshadowed and placed competitively in academic competitions such as University Interscholastic League, Academic Decathlon (3rd in the city and 1st in district) and Business Professionals of America, having more state competitors in the region than any other campus. On the rise are our debate and mock trial teams, which are growing in number and recognition.

Most important are our high school graduation rates, which are notably at 100% and 100% in the distinguished diploma of honorees. We continue to have many of our junior students graduate with their AA degree. The number of juniors earning an AA degree grew from twenty-three students in 2009 to thirty in 2010 to thirty-six in 2011, to now thirty-seven students, our largest early May 2012 graduating class. These students will have an opportunity to attain a third year of college through a scholarship provided by the University of Texas at El Paso while still in high school. Additionally, we have a 0% dropout rate and 98% attendance rate overall for an early college high school. Our campus is a safe haven for our students. Our students, faculty and staff make every day count.

Choosing the "Phoenix" as our campus mascot is no mystery. It indicates why our campus is worthy of the Blue Ribbon Award. The Phoenix is a mythological bird that has symbolized rebirth, immortality, and

renewal. As such, our mission and vision for our campus and students is one of rebirth and renewal. We move our students beyond the limited thinking with which they enter and expand on their dreams and hopes, creating the renewal and rebirth of gifts, talents, and education that will extend beyond the classroom into the world. Their dreams become a reality through diligent work, perseverance and character building. As the old self is discarded through this educational purification, the rebirth occurs. Like the Phoenix, our students are defined by a new immortality and awareness that there are endless possibilities. Mission Early College is at the root of this transformation. Each year brings new Phoenicians to new heights of success.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

A.

A characteristic that sets Mission Early College apart from traditional high schools is a philosophy of "college first, high school second." As a result, we set our expectations higher than most traditional high schools. We expect our students to perform at the commended level.

Thus, we have set two campus goals regarding standardized exams. Our first goal is to have 100% of our juniors meet expectations on their exit level exams, Our second goal is to achieve an exemplary rating with the state, which requires that at least 90% of all students, as a whole and within all subgroups, meet state expectations on their exams.

As of the last testing year (2011), we have easily achieved these goals. In math and science, we have achieved a "met expectations" rating of at least 95% with every freshman and sophomore class, and all three junior classes have achieved a 100% rating. The reading/ELA and social studies scores have been even better; with one exception respectively, every class has achieved a 100% rating, and those exceptions achieved 99%. In addition, we have consistently outpaced the district in terms of commended performance achieving percentages two to three times higher than district averages.

Our students understand that we expect more from them than simply meeting expectations on the state exams. Clearly, their performance on the standardized exams demonstrates their ability to exceed beyond expectations.

B.

Throughout the past five school years, we have been consistent in the performance levels of our students on the TAKS Mathematics and Reading assessments. For every TAKS Mathematics and Reading test that our students have taken, at least 95% of our students have met expectations. Every one of our classes has achieved a 100% passing rate on all Exit level exams, including math and reading.

In analyzing the data from the classes that have taken all three (9th, 10th, and Exit-Level) exams, the performance trends on the math and reading assessments are as follows: On the Reading test, 100% of our students have met expectations at the 9th, 10th and Exit Levels. Only once did our students not achieve 100% passing—this was the 10th-grade test in the spring of 2009, in which 99.12% of our students met expectations. Similarly, our students have achieved great success on the math assessment. On the 9th and 10th grade math test, 95% or more of our students have met expectations. On the Exit Level test, 100% of our students met expectations. These scores are consistent across every subgroup.

The percent of our students who have met expectations on state assessments over the past five years has ranged from 95% to 100%. One noticeable gain in our data is the increase in the number of students who have met expectations from the 10th grade level to the Exit Level math test. This gain is primarily the result of teacher intervention. Preparation measures are taken to help students take and pass the Exit-Level Mathematics exam, especially if they did not meet expectations in the previous years' assessments. The data from the 9th grade and 10th grade assessments are used as a source to help our teachers know what concepts need to be reinforced and which students need extra help.

One significant strategy our mathematics teachers use is one-on-one or small-group remediation. At the beginning of each school year, math teachers identify the 11th grade students in their classrooms who did

not meet expectations on the 10th grade assessment, and they work with these students individually throughout the year. Teachers use the assessment data to identify the specific objectives that each particular student has not mastered. The teacher and student work together to plan meeting times for individual or small-group remediation. The meeting times usually occur on "Flexible Fridays." Students who take college courses on Fridays are afforded a flexible schedule for personalized tutorials within their college course schedules. Flexible Friday provides great opportunities for teachers to work with struggling students on specific course topics or to review assessment results. Additionally, on Flexible Friday, our students have had the opportunity to listen to professional speakers from the community. It also affords us time for academic preparation for scholarly competitions.

Another strategy that our teachers use to help 11th grade students prepare for the Exit Level math test is scaffolding. In preparation for the state Exit level math test, previous student expectations from 8th grade math, Algebra I and Geometry are reviewed. Through various classroom activities, math teachers review concepts from previous courses in their lessons on a regular basis.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Using and analyzing data is one critical component in our campus blueprint for student success. Data analysis informs our instruction for each and every one of our students.

As we review each new cohort of incoming freshmen, data from the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests from the state is one of the criterions used to facilitate the selection process. These tests assess minimum standards for the 8th grade. We also review cumulative grade point averages in each core area; students are expected to have at least an 80 average in each subject. We use this data to select students who have demonstrated the ability to handle the rigorous curriculum expected of them from day one at MECHS.

Once students are selected, they are required to attend a two week freshman orientation camp that is established to enrich and accelerate their experience at MECHS. Teachers also examine each student's Confidential Student Report which reflects the student's strengths and needs in each objective for the respective state assessments: ELAR, mathematics, social studies and science. This allows instructors to design lessons that address identified gaps. In addition, we use TAKS assessment data to prepare our students to pass the ACCUPLACER®, a tool used by the College Board to determine course selection in math, English and reading. Students are required to pass the Reading, Math, and Writing ACCUPLACER® in order for the courses to count as dual credit. The ACCUPLACER® data is shared with students, teachers, and parents a minimum of three times a year as students are advised on college classes. This data gives insight on the amount of course work that may be taken in addition to the modifications that will be made on current degree plans. This process occurs in the summer, spring, and fall. The counselor consistently reviews transcripts and class ranks with each student to ensure ongoing monitoring and communication. Our students are very competitive and conscientious; therefore, class ranking is reviewed and shared with parents and teachers as well. To that end, we incorporate additional instructional support to assist any student who does not pass the ACCUPLACER® the first time. Prescriptive instruction in other core subjects is also embedded within the Flexible Friday schedule. Data such as daily/weekly assessments, student work, and ACCUPLACER® results are used to develop individualized student schedules for Flexible Friday. This process has had a profound impact on student learning and achievement for our campus.

The PLAN, sponsored by ACT, is also a district initiative administered in the fall to all sophomores. The PLAN data predicts which students have a greater chance of not only passing the PSAT, but also attaining the National Merit Scholar recognition.

Inherent in our communication system is the sharing of data with our parents. Parent-Teacher conference night(s) provide collaborative opportunities to discuss student progress. This is essential, as we rely on parents to reinforce the desired learning outcomes that are established at school. Additionally, the

Academic Excellence Indicator System campus report card is sent home to parents to inform them of the campus' background and overall progress. In addition, parents have twenty-four hour access to student grades and progress through our district Electronic Home Access Center (e-HAC) web-based system.

At the same time we enhance success for today's student through data analysis, we also ensure a secure place for tomorrow's workforce candidate. We are cognizant that data-based instruction is a key element in preparing our students to become dynamic and productive leaders, employers and employees in the global arena. It is for this sort of forward thinking that MECHS earned the Student Information System Diamond Award in 2010. Our campus utilizes data to meet the demands of the global job market.

At MECHS, we work collaboratively to chart student progress through data analysis. We also use Eduphoria, a district wide program, to analyze the data for each grade level. This program allows us to develop assessments, as well as to disaggregate the data by class, department, campus and individual student. Eduphoria data results drive instruction and intervention for each student. Students that are at risk of failing or are in need of remediation in any area or at any level will have a conference with teachers and administrators.

We work consistently at MECHS as a cohesive team in assessing student work. This approach provides an efficient and effective means of gaining insight on how to improve instruction

Our success at MECHS is by design. It is a deliberate approach of studying the many facets of student data to maximize student success.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

In the fall of 2006, the vision that a school could foster an environment driven by a rigorous program of study that intentionally aligned high school and college curricula became a reality with the inception of Mission Early College High School. As the educational community took notice we were asked to unpack our successful formula and mentor other early colleges and schools interested in implementing accelerated programs around the country. The blueprint that engineered the comprehensive curriculum at MECHS is rooted in the following common instructional frameworks:

- Collaborative Group Work
- Writing to Learn
- Questioning
- Scaffolding
- Classroom Talk
- Literacy Groups

We host school visits that highlight the intense working model of an early college with an emphasis of ensuring all students achieve the desired end—a distinguished high school diploma, an Associate of Arts and most importantly, 21st century life skills. Visitors are eager to gain perspective on the early college experience from our teachers and students. Our teachers and student panels present three-hour programs embodying our culture and school vision. Our guests are given the opportunity to visit the classrooms to preview the six instructional frameworks used by all disciplines. Professors and deans from Victoria University in Australia, UT Austin, Texas A & M, Houston University, North Carolina Colleges, and University of Texas of the Permian Basin are some educational institutions that have visited our school to learn about the early college concept. The Greater Texas Foundation interviewed our administrative team and our students to attain a snapshot of a successful early college. This video can be found in the Texas High School Project webpage.

Our students have easily assumed the role of ambassadors and are asked to share their insights with the faculty and staff of colleges and universities around the state and country. In addition, they were invited to present in Austin, Texas; Seattle, Washington; and Boston Massachusetts, where they shared their experiences and insights about attending an early college. Our teachers are comfortable in the role of educational leaders and are asked to share their expertise in the district. Our internal curriculum coach along with our math teacher presented interdisciplinary lessons for Communities in Schools in Dallas, Texas. We are committed to developing a successful model for others to follow.

4. Engaging Families and Communities:

Communication, participation, and teamwork are the vital strategies to improve student academic achievement at MECHS. One of the fundamental goals of our school is to improve the relationship between parents and the community, creating effective communication both inside and outside the schoolhouse. Without a doubt, the participation of parents, along with teacher and administrator support is key to a successful program. When a child is accepted as a freshman, parents become our partners in helping their son or daughter undergo the transformation into a successful early college student. Parents begin the process by writing a narrative on the student application in which they not only outline their expectations, but also describe how they will commit to helping MECHS educators and administration through graduation. This partnership between students, parents, educators, and administration has been so successful that parents have been inspired to go back to school and earn a degree along with their sons and daughters.

MECHS student organizations are the heart of student life and community involvement. All student organizations on campus are required to have community service components in which students coordinate drives, collections, and set up volunteer days with different organizations in the community. These organizations include the Child Crisis Center of El Paso, the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure Foundation, and the Humane Society of El Paso. Currently, we are also establishing a relationship with the El Paso Sheriff's Department that will allow students to create public service announcements. Competitions expose students to a professional environment where lawyers, engineers, community business leaders, and other professionals provide guidance, feedback, and support in analyzing student work. MECHS has many programs and initiatives that engage families and communities such as the following:

- National Honor Society engages students in community service opportunities within our region.
- Business Professionals of America (BPA) coordinates the Fall Campfire and Carnival, an important fundraiser for the school where everyone participates including teachers, club sponsors, parents, administration, and our community.
- National Technical Honor Society organizes monthly parent technology classes where tech savvy students present on various topics of interest.
- Science National Honor Society annually hosts the Science Career Fair in which community professionals in all science areas are invited to present to our students on different science-related career fields and the skills necessary to enter those professions.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

12TX1

1. Curriculum:

Mission Early College High School's core curriculum is characterized by adherence to common standards for high-quality instructional practice. While the curriculum is directly aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards, it effectively integrates the Knowledge and Skills for University Success (KSUS), promoting a rigorous and challenging curriculum. The six common instructional frameworks blend the high school and college curriculum and are the key strategies integrated into all disciplines. Collaborative group work, writing to learn, questioning, scaffolding, classroom talk, and literacy groups enable students of diverse skill levels to access challenging material successfully. Our curriculum exemplifies flexibility and adaptability to the needs of our students while raising the level of our teaching.

All ninth graders complete a two-week intensive summer camp focusing on academic skills. Upon completion of the summer camp, each student takes the ACCUPLACER® test to determine placement for college classes. Additionally, freshmen take EDU 1300 in their first semester. This interdisciplinary course is the cornerstone to all disciplines, introducing students to learning strategies such as note-taking, research skills, learning inventories, assessment, and ethical and critical thinking.

With the entire faculty holding Master's degrees, we offer seventeen sections of dual credit courses at MECHS. The curriculum is directly linked to college and career readiness, enabling our high school students to secure paid internships as peer leaders at UT El Paso and as research consultants at Virginia Tech and Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research in Boston. Our curriculum holds appropriate foundational knowledge and skills necessary to begin studies in a career path.

The English language arts course offers a rigorous program of study connecting reading, writing, critical thinking, and research skills with other disciplines. Ninth and tenth grade students are enrolled in Pre-AP classes with eleventh and twelfth grade students taking dual credit courses in college composition, research and British literature.

The social studies curriculum offers intensive study of analytical and thinking skills applicable to other disciplines with a particular focus in writing and research skills. Courses offered include Pre-AP World Geography and World History, dual credit U.S. History 1301-1302 and GOVT 2305/2306 for college credit.

The science curriculum integrates the scientific method and contextual understanding with hands-on skills. Dual credit Biology is required at the freshmen level followed by Pre-AP or college Chemistry, Physics and Anatomy/Physiology.

The math department integrates writing to learn and project-based learning in their curriculum. Freshmen begin with high school Algebra or Geometry and some continue through college pre-calculus and Differential Equations or Calculus III.

The arts coursework focuses on physical expression through sound, movement, and visual representation embracing academic interests linked to other disciplines. All students are offered theatre arts, choir, dance, guitar, piano, and journalism courses. These courses count for elective credit with speech offered as a dual credit course. Journalism students produce the Phoenician Newspaper and Phoenix Yearbook. A competitive dance group is also in place.

The technology department's curriculum focuses on interpersonal skills to strengthen individual performance in the workplace and in society. Every student is required to take Business Information Management I (BIM I) during their freshmen year in which they learn skills in Microsoft Office that are used across the curriculum, both in high school and college courses.

The Physical Education program advocates for personal, family, and community health. Courses include health, weight lifting, swimming, and aerobics. A successful intramural program during our lunch time is in place where teams compete in soccer, basketball, flag football and volleyball tournaments.

MECHS offers Spanish as the foreign language component that consists of six levels. A college component is incorporated in the curriculum for those students who qualify.

2. Reading/English:

The goal of the MECHS English department is to produce an individual capable of understanding and communicating language at a level of sophistication which allows them to be savvy consumers of information in a variety of formats. The alignment of curriculum is vertical, cross-curricular and dual-credit centered. During the initial two-week summer camp the formula for success at MECHS is outlined: organization, preparation, accountability, autonomy and determination. Teachers collaborate to keep this formula of personal accountability consistent throughout the campus.

Another component of the program is the preparation for the ACCUPLACER® reading test because students need a passing score for enrollment in dual and college credit courses. While approximately eighty percent of our incoming freshmen receive the passing score after the two week intensive summer camp, the other twenty percent remediate in challenging intervention workshops where scaffolding and prior learning are used to reinforce ideas and bridge gaps between learning styles and reading levels. Students spend thirty minutes daily with the EDU 1300 instructor working on cause and effect, analyzing literary elements and vocabulary until the student passes the ACCUPLACER® test. As a result, our students do exceptionally well in state standardized testing; yet, our main concern is preparing students to use an array of learning strategies and coping skills to be successful in college courses and beyond. Our curriculum springs from the Key Dimensions of College readiness and are implemented through the Six Common Instructional Frameworks:

- Key Cognitive Strategies: Students learn research through inquiry, interpretation and using evidence in writing, speaking and presenting through Socratic and book seminars.
- Key Content Knowledge: Foundational content such as writing skills and literary elements through literacy groups and classroom talk.
- Key Academic Behaviors: Integrating the syllabi, establishing study groups, note-taking skills.
- Contextual Skills and Awareness: Immersing in the college culture, résumé writing, college admissions, and scholarship portfolio.

With the wide range of students who have diverse skill levels and learning styles, differentiated instruction is a requirement at MECHS. Students are grouped purposefully according to their needs. With our year-round schedule, those students who fall behind are immediately targeted during inter-session for acceleration. Department meetings serve as a reflective purpose for additional teacher research such as sharing of lessons, collaborating on projects, analyzing data and disseminating findings.

3. Mathematics:

The math department's curriculum is accelerated with many MECHS students achieving college level Calculus III while still in high school. Although students are not required to start with college level math as freshmen, many students place into college Pre-Calculus after the two-week intensive summer camp. The goal is for 100% of students to place in college Pre-Cal by the junior year in high school whereby

allowing many students to receive their Associate of Arts by the end of their junior year. The math teachers hold ACCUPLACER® workshops during Flexible Friday where students review problems through group work or teacher conferences. The math curriculum involves a deep understanding of the principles and techniques in math. It is more than mere memorization of formulas; the curriculum targets the application of conceptual understanding for problem solving. The instructional frameworks are pivotal in connecting learning for students.

- Writing to Learn: A math journal is required for explanations on problem-solving and how students approach specific questions with a final written reflection of the students' learning process.
- Collaborative Work: Students work collaboratively on word problems requiring a system of equations. They draw on prior knowledge of writing two-variable equations from word problems and then find a way to combine the two equations to allow for solving of unknown variables.
- Classroom Talk: Conversations develop reasoning and problem-solving ability. Students discuss in small groups then present to whole group. Some topics are introduced through an online presentation. Solving complex problems is generated through small group discussion.
- Scaffolding is inherent in all math lectures continually layering past concepts to address current topics. Students utilize prior knowledge that is recalled to understand new concepts.
- Questioning: Math lectures are interactive involving specific explanations and modeling with all levels of questions offered. These questions range from level one knowledge based "arithmetic" questions to level three evaluative critical thinking questions involving "what if" scenarios.

Underperforming students are offered several options to assist with improvement. For example all students who failed assessments are required to correct their responses. Additionally, they attend mandatory tutoring on Flexible Friday. Students revisit journals with instructor and tutors to reevaluate the thought process of problem solving. Students provide an explanation of how they corrected their original mistakes, thereby demonstrating learning of the material. The goal of the math curriculum is to ignite curiosity in subsequent areas of mathematical study as well interdisciplinary connections.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Since its inception, Mission Early College High School has been dedicated to educating the whole student. Following the philosophy of *anima sana in corpus sana*, or "healthy mind in a healthy body", MECHS is one of the few early colleges to provide students on-campus access to a range of elective classes in Dance, Music, Theatre, and Physical Education, as well as Spanish, Journalism and Business. These instructional paths and their corollary opportunities for performance and competition bring a vital balance to students who, nonetheless, are devoted to a rigorous academic life. The success of MECHS students in these fields and other co-curricular events firmly supports our philosophy of development of well-rounded individuals.

In addition to their reputations for academic excellence, Mission students have demonstrated performance excellence through organizations such as the award-winning Phoenix Flames Dance Ensemble. Young musicians participate in UIL Solo and Ensemble Competition. Budding actors have produced and performed for school wide events such as Greek Week, featuring performances of classical Greek plays, and a community Renaissance Fair with markets, knights and stocks. Athletic abilities are nurtured in a wide-ranging selection of life sports such as kick-boxing, swimming, weight training and intramural basketball, soccer and volleyball.

Phoenicians take their expertise into the community in a variety of competitions, coached by MECHS instructors. Included in these opportunities are nationally recognized competitions in Academic Decathlon, Business Professionals of America, and FIRST Robotics, in all of which Mission students have received state and national recognition. Other activities allow our students to apprentice and practice

future career skills through Mock Trial, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Cross Examination Debate, and UIL Academic Meet.

Mission Early College High School has firmly banished the stereotype of the isolated scholar, living only a life of the mind. The school offers a solid curricular foundation for the whole child and an array of school-wide clubs and organizations. A Mission graduate will move forward into higher education and life with a grounded mind, spirit and body, prepared to interact and positively impact his/her community.

5. Instructional Methods:

The drive of our instructional methods at MECHS stems from developing and supporting a college-ready focus in the classroom. Teaching for understanding through inquiry approaches, in which teachers and students collaborate, accelerates learning for academic success in high school and college courses. Since the opening of MECHS, the Texas High School Project's (THSP) common instructional frameworks consisting of six instructional strategies are the basis for our coherent college-preparatory curriculum. Collaborative group work, writing to learn, questioning, scaffolding, classroom talk, and literacy groups provide students of all skill levels access to complex information needed to meet state and college ready-standards. These frameworks along with the protocols are embedded in all disciplines with the goal of engaging students in learning and allowing them to take an active role in their education. MECHS is a one-to-one campus where every student is issued a laptop for assignments. All courses on campus include a technology component in which the student has to demonstrate proficient skills in both internet and software use.

Working in unison with the frameworks are the campus instructional rounds and our system for collaboratively Looking At Student Work (LASW) to examine connections between teacher instruction and student learning. The instructional rounds are used as a process for teachers to maximize teaching and learning possibilities. LASW frameworks are implemented in a non-evaluative setting. At MECHS the LASW is a vehicle to achieve deep understanding through dialogue, with the philosophy that student work tells us what students have learned and guide us to the next instructional step. The three protocols used for LASW are Collaborative Assessment Conference, The Consultancy, and the Tuning Protocol. The instructional rounds and LASW are continuous throughout the year with 100% participation. The campus instructional coach provides training and feedback for these protocols and ensures all faculty members participate in both processes throughout the year.

Presently, our schedule parallels our neighboring community college schedule. We have a ninety minute A-B Block, with Friday scheduling eight 45 minute class periods. Freshmen adhere to a C-day where they visit each class to strengthen instruction. All other classifications have a Flexible Friday schedule where students select what classes they visit for additional learning. Students who need support may conference with teachers and receive individualized instruction. Teachers provide activities such as ACCUPLACER® tutoring, labs, mini-grammar lessons, honor's projects, creative writing, dance, etiquette or additional tutoring.

6. Professional Development:

Professional development initiatives from Socorro ISD, Texas High School Project (THSP), and El Paso Community College all provide opportunities to the MECHS faculty for professional growth that creates, supports and maintains a college-going culture at school. This direction also supports an overall emphasis on rigorous scholarship within our faculty and a greater unity between the three strands that inform all our work in the classroom.

Required reading for the faculty is *College Knowledge* by David Conley. The force steering professional development centers on Conley's four key dimensions of college readiness: Key Cognitive Strategies, Key Content Knowledge, Academic Behaviors and Contextual Skills and Awareness. Our internal

campus curriculum coach revisits these concepts at the beginning of each school year along with the Texas High School Project Six Common Instructional Framework. As the year advances, the instructional Campus Rounds and Looking At Student Work are in place for examining the frameworks and refining the process. THSP personnel conduct yearly classroom visits followed by a conference with each faculty member for feedback sessions and to discuss professional growth opportunities. Faculty meetings are used for reflecting on how campus professional development contributed to more rigorous learning within all classrooms.

The district has also embedded four half-day campus staff development days into the school calendar. The campus curriculum coach attends monthly district training sessions that includes alignment of curriculum with TEKS, rigor, differentiating instruction, and using technology for analyzing student data. As a trainer, the curriculum coach presents three hour workshops to the faculty that incorporates these best practices and addresses the needs of teachers and students in an early college.

As a direct reflection of the coaching, the campus has adopted writing to learn, questioning techniques and collaboration across all disciplines. The practice of teaching our students to think more critically through writing to learn from low-stakes writing to drafting formal pieces is used campus wide.

All MECHS faculty participate in meetings with the community college to align course syllabi with college readiness across grade levels. Furthermore, dual credit teachers meet with the college dean to discuss goals and expectations each semester and to ensure the course is in full compliance with the college.

The professional development at MECHS is in turn producing students who pass all state standardized tests and are enrolling and succeeding at El Paso Community College and UT El Paso while still in high without the need of developmental courses.

7. School Leadership:

Mission Early College High School (MECHS) adheres to a leadership philosophy that is defined as unified collaboration. It starts with the principal who serves the team as the instructional leader. The principal is highly visible and embodies expectations for the campus. A shared vision was developed in union with the entire team. Each goal is thorough and specific and is designed as a catalyst for student success. MECHS works collaboratively focusing on our students' success, development and future endeavors which drive our purpose and mission. This is what has truly made a difference in the quality education that is offered daily to our students at our campus. As a team we communicate, plan and organize challenging and rigorous instruction collaboratively. We examine instruction from various angles as we work vertically and horizontally keeping in mind our own goals, the goals of the district, and the college. We hold a conviction that all of our students can and will succeed.

MECHS has established a "college first" philosophy that provides the foundation for the school culture, thus creating the expectation of students, teachers and staff alike. We work together to ensure our students succeed academically and socially through extra-curricular activities and events. Our goal is to have all students graduate from high school with a Distinguished Achievement Diploma and simultaneously earn an Associate of Arts degree. Approximately two-thirds of our students will attend a four year university during their senior year of high school, with the remainder attending soon after graduation.

Since the school's inception, MECHS has earned Exemplary status for five consecutive years. These accolades were accomplished through analyzing and utilizing data to plan and drive instructional goals by department and campus. We focus on quality staff development that embodies and incorporates strands from the best practices aligned to Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills standards for high school and post-secondary success.

We at Mission Early College High School pride ourselves in pioneering a college experience for our high school students. Our approach is innovative, flexible and creative; it is a model that others can and should emulate in an effort to increase the college readiness of more high school students.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 10 Test: Texas Assessment of Academic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Yearly Publisher Pearson Publisher: Texas Education Agency; NCS Pearson Education Inc.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	98	96	96	97	
Commended	38	30	25	43	
Number of students tested	122	125	112	116	
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	99	96	93	96	
Commended	38	26	24	44	
Number of students tested	82	81	76	77	
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended		100	100		
Commended					
Number of students tested		1	2		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	98	96	95	97	
Commended	37	30	28	43	
Number of students tested	115	112	100	113	
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. none					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

Mission Early College H.S. opened in the fall of 2006 with a freshman class. There is no data for 2006/2007 10th grade mathematics since we did not have 10th grade students during that particular school year.

12TX1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading | Grade: 10 | Test: Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Yearly Publisher Pearson | Publisher: Texas Education Agency: NCS Pearson Education Inc.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	99	100	
Commended	23	22	35	44	
Number of students tested	122	125	113	116	
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	99	100	
Commended	24	26	32	45	
Number of students tested	82	81	77	77	
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended		100	100		
Commended			50		
Number of students tested		1	2		
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	99	100	
Commended	23	24	34	44	
Number of students tested	115	112	101	113	
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. none					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

Mission Early College H.S. opened in the fall of 2006 with a freshman class. There is no data for 2006/2007 10th grade reading since we did not have 10th grade students during that particular school year.

12TX1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics | Grade: 11 Test: Texas Assessment of Academic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Yearly Publisher Pearson | Publisher: Texas Education Agency; NCS Pearson Education Inc.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100		
Commended	43	37	56		
Number of students tested	116	109	116		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100		
Commended	43	37	54		
Number of students tested	70	75	74		
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100			
Commended					
Number of students tested	1	2			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100		
Commended	43	38	56		
Number of students tested	105	99	112		
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. none					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

Mission Early College H.S. opened in the fall of 2006 with a freshman class. There is no data for 11th grade mathematics for the 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 school years since we had no 11th grade students until the 2008/2009 school year.

12TX1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading | Grade: 11 | Test: Texas Assessment of Academic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Yearly | Publisher: Texas Education Agency; NCS Pearson

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr		
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100		
Commended	26	50	63		
Number of students tested	117	109	115		
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99		
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100		
Commended	21	51	61		
Number of students tested	71	75	74		
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100			
Commended					
Number of students tested	1	2			
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100		
Commended	25	53	63		
Number of students tested	106	99	111		
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. none					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

Mission Early College H.S. opened in the fall of 2006 with a freshman class. There is no data for 11th grade reading for the 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 school years since we had no 11th grade students until the 2008/2009 school year.

12TX1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 9 Test: Texas Assessment of Academic Skills

Edition/Publication Year: Yearly Publisher: Texas Education Agency; NCS Pearson Education Inc.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard	96	99	98	97	95
Commended	54	58	50	40	41
Number of students tested	121	129	129	115	121
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard	96	99	100	95	99
Commended	52	60	53	38	48
Number of students tested	85	85	77	79	79
2. African American Students					
Met Standard	100	100	100	100	
Commended	0	50			
Number of students tested	3	2	1	1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard	96	99	97	96	95
Commended	54	59	50	38	41
Number of students tested	112	117	114	104	116
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard				100	
Commended				100	
Number of students tested				1	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. none					
Met Standard					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12TX1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 9 Test: Reading/ELA

Edition/Publication Year: Yearly Publisher Pearson Publisher: Texas Education Agency; NCS Pearson Education Inc.

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	55	39	12	53	57
Number of students tested	119	129	129	116	120
Percent of total students tested	98	100	100	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed					
Percent of students alternatively assessed					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	54	35	16	49	59
Number of students tested	83	85	77	80	78
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100	100	
Commended	50	50			
Number of students tested	2	2	1	1	
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100	100	100
Commended	55	38	13	52	57
Number of students tested	111	117	114	104	115
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended				100	
Commended					
Number of students tested				1	
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
6. none					
Met Standard/Commended					
Commended					
Number of students tested					
NOTES:					

12TX1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	97	98	98	97	95
Commended	45	42	44	41	41
Number of students tested	359	363	357	231	121
Percent of total students tested	100	100	99	99	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	98	98	97	95	99
Commended	44	41	43	40	48
Number of students tested	237	241	227	156	79
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100	100	0
Commended	0	20	0	0	0
Number of students tested	4	5	3	1	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	97	98	97	96	95
Commended	44	42	45	40	41
Number of students tested	332	328	326	217	116
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended	0	0	0	100	0
Commended	0	0	0	100	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	1	0
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Met Standard/Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12TX1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: Weighted Average

	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007
Testing Month					
SCHOOL SCORES					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	99	100	100
Commended	34	36	35	48	57
Number of students tested	358	363	357	232	120
Percent of total students tested	99	100	99	100	99
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	99	100	100
Commended	33	36	36	47	59
Number of students tested	236	241	228	157	78
2. African American Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	100	100	0
Commended	33	20	33	0	0
Number of students tested	3	5	3	1	0
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Met Standard/Commended	100	100	99	100	100
Commended	34	37	36	47	57
Number of students tested	332	328	326	217	115
4. Special Education Students					
Met Standard/Commended	0	0	0	100	0
Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	1	0
5. English Language Learner Students					
Met Standard/Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
6.					
Met Standard/Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Commended	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	0	0	0	0
NOTES:					

12TX1

26